THE BURUSHO OF HUNZA

a miserable ten—none of your 'some thirty, some sixty, some an hundredfold'—while lucerne only gives three crops. 243

The Hunzukuts' main food is bread, of which the housewife makes a large variety, from the leavened wheatened cake with butter for feast days, the unleavened flapjack of wheat, barley or blended flours for everyday, to the bitter buckwheat scones of leaner times. Milk is not an article of diet; the animals yield little at the best and none at all when their own offspring is weaned. Such milk as there is contains little fat content, which is not to be wondered at in view of the food on which the animals exist; it is converted into butter, curds and such preservable forms. Butter is stored in birch-bark wrappings beneath an adjacent water-channel and broached only on festive occasions or for the entertainment of a guest. Meat is tasted at most twice or three times a year, at festivals or on some day of domestic rejoicing, a wedding or a birth, and then it will be 'some tainted wether of the flock, meetest for death' who supplies the sacrifice. 262 234

The womenfolk tend small vegetable plots in the corner of a field or separate garden, where carrots, turnips, marrows, gourds and half a hundred kinds of humble 'greens' are grown, and a few plants whose leaves or seeds are esteemed for flavouring, along with a few tobacco plants for the men's pipes. After grain and greens, the essential item of Hunza diet is the apricot, fresh in the early summer and dried during the rest of the year; mulberries, fresh and dried, come next in importance, then a few apples, pears and peaches (these little valued because they will neither keep nor dry) and a few grapes for such relatively well-to-do houses as can afford space and water to grow them. Grapes ripen too late to be dried into raisins and the small quantity not consumed fresh is converted into light wine, brightening the winter days for those who have it, and drunk within a couple of months of manufacture. The apricot has yet further uses. Its kernel yields the oil which lights very modestly the winter nights. The Burusho woman is said to refuse, most wisely, to live above the level of the ripe apricot (say 9–10,000 feet). This is, I suspect only a base pretext of her husband's for refusing to live at these altitudes himself. Be that as it may, the upper villages of Hunza are almost exclusively inhabited by immigrants from Wakhan accustomed to a treeless existence and a diet of barley only. Grafting fruit trees is an art thoroughly understood. The above-mentioned fruits supply the only sugar which the Hunza people know. 244 262 245 [273] [354] 361 245

Despite all diligence in tilling the ungrateful soil, despite the utmost 262

2: Lorimer T-3 (1923-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

outrageous hat, must be a terrifying sight when it advances on you for the first time—but I learned cautiously to admire the babies from afar, though the father or mother always wanted to show them off. Only little Faqér, initiated so young, was always unafraid, and would stretch out his little hands and gurgle at me and let me take him in my arms or tickle him.

Soni, of the next house to Bibi Gímo's (I had to call it No. 1A, because in my first notes I had confused the two households) had a little girl Afrots—quite the ugliest and brightest atom of three years old in Hunza. She had cried the first day on seeing me but immediately made friends, and ever after if I were sighted would run up to me and put out an abnormally grubby little paw and say "How do you do?" in imitation English fashion. On general principles we resisted all temptation to teach the children English ways or words or tales. This was almost my one lapse from grace, but Afrots was by general consent a special case, and her old grandfather, Aliko, was extraordinarily proud when he was witness to our meetings.

In the very first days of romping with the children of No. 1 and 1A on the threshing floor I had—stupidly—thought it might be fun to teach Shamúli, Bano, and Afrots to dance. So I stood up and started on a Highland schottische, and endeavoured, with little success, to coax them to join in. I was puzzled by something a little frigid in the air and soon gave up the attempt. When I climbed home for breakfast Dádo gravely and kindly said: "Excuse me, Mother, but Hunza women do not dance. It is thought unseemly." I thanked him for the warning; I wasn't sure whether the fear was that I should corrupt the girls or merely make an unseemly exhibition of myself. Either danger was to be avoided, so that began and ended my dancing lessons. Later Qudrat Ullah explained that in the olden days, when the Hunzukuts distilled a powerful *araq* from their mulberries, men and women used to dance together in drunken orgies that had untoward consequences. The Mir had long since forbidden the spirit, which provoked quarrels as well as dances, and "mixed dancing" fell under the same ban. This was the only man-made restriction on woman's freedom that I encountered in Hunza, and it did not seem to worry anyone.

Chapter 23

WINTER AND THE "GREAT COLD"

132 No climate could be more delightful than the autumn and early winter of Hunza, from October till far on in December, and the Burusho make the most of these bracing, genial days, hurrying to get through every sort of outdoor job before the six or eight weeks of the "Great Cold."

245 Not by any means every household can spare water, manure, or space for a vineyard, but those who can value not only the fresh grapes which ripen later than all other fruits, but also the home-made wine which helps to brighten the cheerless [251] winter days. Unfortunately, by the time the grapes are ripe, the sun has already lost its heat and raisin-drying is impossible. At least this was the only plausible explanation we could get for the fact that the Hunzukuts who dry their mulberries and apricots do not make raisins.

The vines are trained over low pergolas only 3 or 4 feet high, less frequently allowed to climb up living trees. Since the Hunzukuts greatly value shady sitting places we wondered why they did not go in for loftier pergolas like those the Persians love. The explanation is cruelly simple—they cannot spare the extra length of poles.

There were not many vineyards in Aliábád, but we located two favourably situated ones and paid several visits to each. One was many hundred feet down, at Gulkhan, below the old fort. Though the vine leaves were still green, every bunch of ● 273 fruit had been already cut when we came down to see the wine-making. Under the roof of an open-faced shed were three "mangers," as it were, set side by side, the two end ones stacked high with ripe grapes. There must have been 3 or 4 cwt. at least in each. The centre one was only partially full.

WINTER AND THE "GREAT COLD"

The central compartment—not unlike a kitchen sink—had 273 ●
a stone floor slightly sloping towards a hole in front which was fitted with a neat little spout of birchbark, below which a great iron cauldron stood. One of the young men of the family (having doubtless washed his feet) leapt into the sink, rested his hands on the sides of it, and tramped, tramped, tramped, with all his weight. It looked very like hard work. Another man crouched alongside the spout, holding a large-meshed basket which filtered the juice as it ran out into the cauldron. The skins thus trapped were thrown back for another trampling. As required, further supplies of grapes were taken from the side compartments and thrown into the wine-press. After seeing our fill of this process and taking what photographs were possible in the patchwork of light and shade, we climbed steeply uphill to a flattish spot where other even more interesting activities were afoot.

Under a big boulder a flat stone had been converted into a trough by little "concrete" walls made of sand mixed with fat. The slimy mush of skins, stalks, and stones left after yesterday's pressing had been brought up here. In the trough they laid a wicker ring 9 or 10 inches across and a couple of inches thick. Into this they dumped as much of the green stuff as it would hold; then they laid another ring on the top of the first and filled it till they had a pile a foot high or so. On top they now placed a flat slab of stone, and across it a stout pole for lever, which they wedged firmly under the boulder as a fulcrum. The pole projected like one half of a see-saw. On to it a man leapt, thus pressing down the stone slab on to the articulated basket, and out gushed the juice into a vessel below. Then the stone was lifted, the top ring of the ingenious basket thrown aside, and the squeezing process repeated till nothing was left but a wet round cake of skins, seeds, and stalks. This is then [233] put in the sun to dry, and is much valued as a cattle food. Our wine-friends told us that the wine made from this second pressing is counted superior to the first.

When the receiving vessels are full, the juice is transferred through a wooden funnel into a skin sack and set aside to ferment. It is not allowed to stand overlong, for October's

273 brew will all be finished by the end of December, but a man is looked on as over-impetuous who does not keep it for at least a month. Old vintages are luxuries for wealthier lands. The Hunzukuts do not profess to be expert vintners or connoisseurs of wine. They consider it rather a gamble how the wine turns out: "Sometimes it is sweet and sometimes sour. Either is good to drink. But if we have enough manure and if the season has been hot enough fully to ripen the grapes, then the wine is sweet."

788 The wine and weaving having been disposed of and the winter-wheat sown, the year's serious work is over, and little remains but to fumigate the empty manure shed. We had come in from our walk one evening and were settling down to work after tea when I heard a modest little "Mother dear!" outside the window, and found Hérul Nisa had been sent down to tell us that Ustád Nadíro and Bibi Anjír were going to fumigate their byre in the good old style, if we would care to come. So we flung on our coats, seized a lantern, and scrambled up the particularly rocky track that led to No. 8. Bibi Anjír and her married daughter were watching proceedings from the roof of the byre which also forms the landing at the top of the ladder that leads to their verandah and summer living-room. The couple at No. 8 are old-fashioned and scrupulously keep up the ancient fumigating ceremony which many of their younger neighbours neglect.

The wall of their manure byre sticks out at right angles into the lane, and the door of it is sideways on. In the angle formed between it and the house, Nadíro had a little fire of dry sticks already burning. He took an iron ladle with a long handle and filled it full of precious apricot-kernel oil and heated it over the fire. There was a cold circular wind whizzing round which delayed the oil's getting warm and catching fire. We and a lot of interested neighbours pressed in round him as closely as we could to shelter the flame, which at last blazed up like the brandy in our tablespoons to light the Christmas pudding. Then the old man went into the byre and Hérul Nisa followed him with a bowl of cold water. He took a little of the water and flung it into the ladle four times, causing a lovely flare

to threaten s.o. *in ar stʌm* I frightened him. *fəravjtsum, ər netʌn, (kok) dusuryʌm* putting him in fear I took these things from the treasurer. 60.14.

2. *ʌr °-mʌnʌs* to be afraid (of), to fear. The object, when expressed, is put in the ablative: *ʌkil ər gumai.i bʌm ke* if you were so afraid. 282.21. *ʌr nʌmʌn at'aiya ba* I have not returned, fearing (i.e out of fear). 282.22. *je uŋtsum ar amaiya ba* I am afraid of you. 18.6. *Š. Bahrʌm Di.u Sʌfi·dtsum ʌr nimʌn . . . mostʌqʌmi* fearing the Di.u Safid, Š. B. . . . hid her. 16.4.

The dative is found in: *epʌči.ər nivčər ər umai.ibʌm* they were afraid to go to it. 222.5. (Cp. Sh. *ər*).

ʌr °-mʌnʌs as Adj. and Noun.

1. One who fears: cowardly, timid. — *ar imʌnʌs hirʌn bai.i* he is a timid man.
2. That which one fears; alarming, dangerous, dreadful, terrible (to look at). — *ʌr mimʌnʌs diš, gʌn* a place, road which-we-are-afraid-of, i.e. a dangerous place, road. *ʌr mimʌnʌsʌn bai.i* he is a dangerous man, or a man of alarming aspect. *ʌr mimʌnʌsʌn (hʌγur) bi* it is a dangerous horse.

ærʌba -muts x gun-carriage; a kind of crude wheel barrow, on which a basket is fixed, used for transporting earth.

ærʌn v. *ʌ·rʌn.*

ʌrʌq -iŋ, -ičiŋ y alcohol, spirit, arrack. — *gindawərə ʌrʌq* spirit made from "Sinjid" (fruit of jujube tree). *birʌnčə ʌrʌq* mulberry spirit (used

273 to be made till recently in Hunza). *hir sisɛ birʌnčɛ ʌrʌkičiŋ di.ʊsin* the men, having produced mulberry spirit. 330.4. *padša mərʌkavlo ʌrʌq mi bʌm* the King was drinking spirits in the court. 86.19. *padša iriŋvlo ʌrʌq bilum minimi* the King drank the arrack that was in his hand. 86.22. Ar.

601 *-ʌrər -šo hm son-in-law. — *le.i ˈarərˈ* O (my) son-in-law! *ɛvɛrɪ ka bʊrt xʊš mʌnimi* he became much pleased with his son-in-law. 39.2. *pʌdša hʊkʊm ɛtimi . . . . ʊɛ ɛvərš.ər* the King gave orders to those sons-in-law of his. 120.21.

000 *-ʌrʌs, *-ʌrč-, Impv. *-ʌri, Ppa. n*-ʌrin.

1. To send (s.o.), despatch. The Pn. pf. refers to the direct object.
   inɛ jɛ ʌvrči he will send me.
   govrčʌm I'll send you.
   ɛvɪrčʌm, mo.ɪrčʌm I'll send him, her.
   mɛvrčʊmʌn they'll send us.
   mʌvrčʌm I'll send you (pl.).
   ovrčʌm I'll send them.
   nɛvɪrin having sent him.
   ʊɛ aiyovri don't send them!
   Imʌm Yʌr Beg Paikɛṭɛ ɛvri send I. Y. B. to Paik. *da ʌltʌn ovrimi* again he sent two men. 24.8. *ivɛ . . . gʊrti.ər morʊmʌn* they sent her to the hut. 114.6.
2. It may be regarded as supplying the causative of *niyʌs* to go, i.e. to cause to go.
3. It is used, more or less metaphorically, in various idiomatic expressions: — *gʊsɛ . . . xʌn ʌwɛrši kɛ jivtsʊm ʌvrči* if this (elephant) flings me down it will kill me (despatch me from life). 76.25. *ʊmɛ daulʌt ɣonikɪš dʊrʊriŋvlo*

262 A farmer who owned and worked 10 acres of work-
556 able land might be able to afford to slaughter a sheep,
231 a goat or a bullock once a year. Yet this luxury could not be dreamed of by the farmer with but one acre.

● 273 Also, while winter lasts, a glass of wine made from
245 Hunzan grapes is enjoyed occasionally . . . but chiefly by the male head of the household.

415 Knives, forks and spoons as are used in the West are
[412] not seen in the average Hunzan home and even earthenware plates are rare. But cups and earthenware bowls are to be found in most homes. Wooden bowls fashioned out of walnut by the wood-turner of the village are also used in many homes.

352 The rooms are quite bare in most homes. Furniture is a luxury and a rarity. In the homes there are found usually a chest, a chair or a couch and a table. Shelves to hold dishes are seen in most every home. Occasionally, a dresser or cabinet can be found. The floor in an average Hunzan home is an earthen one with a large
354 square hole in the center for the fire. Then, of course, there is a large square hole in the roof to allow the smoke to leave and to allow light to enter, for there are no glass windows. This is fully open in the summer but during the colder winter days the hole is kept
164 partly or almost closed. This is the chief contributor to the eye troubles which affect many people in Hunza, as mentioned elsewhere in this book.

439 At one time little or no money ever entered Hunza
437 and the meager trade that they did do with passing caravans was by means of barter. The caravans coming through from China would bring cooking utensils, cloth, silk, tea and other commodities. For these, the people of Hunza would trade some of their crops or would work as coolies, porters or bearers.

000 During the past few years a bit of money has come

7:Tobe C,T-3 (1959)1960 AV7 Burusho AV7
Hunza

that may exist or be created in an agricultural community, no seed is available, the Mir has been known to procure supplies from neighboring states and supply his people with sufficient planting stock. 241 643

While through the entire East cow dung and yak dung are used for fuel, in Hunza this is positively not true. The Hunzans are too intelligent to use the mainstay of their lives for fuel. Once it is burned it is gone; but if it is put back into the land, it is there to produce crops for another year. They show their intelligence, if proof of their intelligence is needed, by this one sound principle of self-survival in their means of agriculture. 241 372

However, in the more northerly sections of Hunza, closer to the Chinese border, they do use yak dung for fires because of the almost total lack of wood or other types of fuel. They just have to keep themselves warm during the winter.

Here is a list of the vegetables grown in Hunza—potatoes, turnips, carrots, beans, peas, lettuce, pumpkins, tomatoes, melons, watermelons, radishes, onions, cabbage, spinach, cauliflower. 244

In fruits there are mulberries, apricots, apples, pears, peaches, grapes, walnuts, almonds, a few plums and some cherries. 245

Grapes are grown fairly extensively because they can plant them against most any wall, as long as they have a bit of soil in which to gain a foothold for their roots. From these grapes they make their Hunzan wine. [273]

They grow a few strawberries, but I could find no currants, gooseberries, raspberries—nor did they know what raspberries were.

The grains grown in Hunza, starting from the most important, are wheat, barley, rye, millet, buckwheat and a small quantity of rice. Some alfalfa is grown as a forage crop. 243 246

262 meals. By September, wheat replaces the barley, and fresh grapes, carrots, and some melons are available. The [273] grapes are either eaten fresh or made into wine; the supply of both is always exhausted by spring.

796 585 Tumushuling, the great winter celebration in mid-December, is a sort of delayed thanksgiving feast. December 19, the day before the Tumushuling celebration, is the day in Hunza on which all weddings are celebrated. Each bridegroom, accompanied by several of his friends, goes to the home of his betrothed and sits outside her door, which is kept partially open. Periodically, he hands in gifts of cloth, food, or perhaps even a dish or pan [431] from Pakistan. Meanwhile, his friends give chapatties with butter, a real luxury, to any wayfarers who may pass by—a custom that encourages some travelers to take circuitous routes in order to encounter the well-to-do [492] marriages. By evening the gifts are exhausted and the groom returns home, leading his veiled bride, who either walks or is mounted on a donkey. Tumushuling thus is a group wedding celebration as well as a harvest festival. [643] [431] The Mir gives a small gift, usually a piece of cloth, to every bridegroom who comes to claim it.

585 583 As in most Asian cultures, Hunza marriage is civil rather than sacramental. The ceremony is really a not-too-symbolic purchase of the bride,

584 Marriages are not arranged against
586 the will of either party, and although
divorce is legally very easy for men
593 or women, it is not common. Women
are neither abused nor overworked,
and the mother is the respected chief
of the house, as the father is of the
[591] farm. Marriage does not encompass
companionship as we know it: men
[562] spend their spare time in the company
of other men, and women visit exclu-
562 sively with other women. They hold
535 their dances on separate threshing
floors a half-mile or so apart, on the
same night, and woe betide the eager
teen-age boy who dresses in his sister's
clothes and sneaks into a girls' dance.

262 At the time of the Tumushuling,
[796] and only then, Hunza families
[231] butcher a sheep or two: cold weather
[251] preserves the meat for the few days
before it is all eaten—and it is virtually
all eaten. Even the long bones are
cracked to extract the last marrow.
After this taste of meat, the winter of
the dietary year sets in. Gradually the
supply of carrots and potatoes fails,
then the wheat, the barley, the dried
[148] apricots, and the tea. By springtime
the poorer folk may eat only once in
two days. No one starves to death, but
no one has enough to stop hunger.

146 The regular Hunza diet has no fats,
no animal proteins, no vitamin A, no
vitamin D, a deficiency of vitamin B,
and a serious deficiency of calcium.
Apricots contain some sugar and vita-
min C, but the poorer families are un-
245 able to raise large crops. (The size
556 of apricot orchards determines a
man's wealth and status.) Hunzas use
372 every bit of the apricot, as they do of
824 the sheep. They cut the pits from the
fruits, crack them, and remove the al-
[412] mond-like nuts. The women hand-
grind these with stone mortars, then
squeeze the meal between a hand-stone
[359] and a flat rock to express the oil. Apri-
cot oil is fuel for the saucer-shaped
lamps that illuminate their homes, as
lamps of this type have done since the
824 Bronze Age. The oil is very bitter, na-
278 turally enough, because of its high
content of prussic acid, fifty drops of
which are said to be lethal in about
[273] four hours. Men add a few drops, as
[762] bitters, to their wine, and occasion-
ally a despondent woman takes a dose
in order to commit suicide.

164 Mild cases of rickets and scurvy
146 are rampant every spring—not enough
to kill, just enough to loosen teeth,
cause aching knees, and deform ribs

Adelaide G-3 (1875-1878) 1880 Afgh-Afghanistan-Afgh
4 AV3 Dard AV 3
Burushe AV 7

D 454 before he has had time to confide the secret of their hiding place to his son. The practice is entirely confined to the Shins, who have many legends of lost treasures which have fallen under the guardianship of demons.

D 234 251 556 In both Chilas and Darel, a practice exists of storing clarified butter in cellars for a great number of years. It turns deep red and keeps for more than a hundred years, when it is much prized. A tree is sometimes planted over the cellar to ensure its not being disturbed, and wealth is computed by the amount of butter stored up. On one occasion a deputation came to me from Darel to ask that some run-away slaves should be compelled to say where they had buried their master's butter, as they alone knew the secret.

D 273 B 273 Wine, which at one time was universally drunk, is also placed in flagged underground cellars to ripen in large earthen jars, but is never kept more than a year. In digging the foundations of my house at Gilgit, I came on one of these old cellars with two large jars in it, which had evidently been undisturbed for many years. The drinking of wine has much diminished under Islam, and where still practised is concealed as much as possible, except in Hunza and Ponyal, where public jollifications are not uncommon. The Maulai sect make no secret of the practice, and on my visit to Hunza, in 1876, a bottle of Scotch whiskey made Ghazan Khan so gloriously drunk that all Hunza spoke of it with admiration.

D 526 Polo-playing, of which so complete an account has been given by Mr. Drew, is the national game. Dardistan play, however, lacks the neatness of the Munnipoori game; but what is wanting in style is quite made up in enthusiasm, old men joining in the game as long as they are able to sit on a horse. Matches are generally played for some small stake, and the conquerors exact all the rights of victory by taunting their beaten opponents. In Chitral the game, which is called "ghal," is played somewhat differently from the way described by Mr. Drew. Aman-ool-mulk, the present ruler of Chitral, was said to be the best player in the country when a young man.

000 The game is quite unknown in Badakhshan, where "buzkushi," or "goat-snatching," is the favourite amusement. The following description of this game as played by the Kirghiz is given by Shaw,[1] under the name of "Ooghlak:—"

"The headless body of a goat is thrown on the ground, and every one tries to pick it up without leaving the saddle. The press is tremen-

[1] Shaw's High Tartary, Yarkand and Kashgar.